

Message Text

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13

ACTION INR-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-04 EUR-12 NEA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00

RSC-01 OES-03 /032 W

----- 086674

R 221612Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 501

INFO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USINT ALGIERS

USMISSION USUN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SPOP, SS, SP

SUBJ: POPULATION DATA FOR SPANISH SAHARA

REF: STATE 250363

1. IN CONFORMITY WITH REQUEST FOR POPULATION DATA (C-VI-4-58539) IN REFTEL, EMBASSY CHECKED WITH MFA FOR STATUS OF CENSUS WHICH HAS BEEN UNDERWAY IN SHARA SINCE SEPTEMBER. MFA SAID CENSUS HAD BEEN COMPLETED BUT DATA HAD OT YET BEEN FULLY COLLATED. CENSUS WAS NOT MADE OF ACTUAL POPULATION BUT ONLY OF ADULT HEADS OF FAMILY WHO WOULD BE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE IN REFERENDUM SCHEDULED TO BE HELD FIRST HALF OF 1975. GOS, THEREFORE, DOES NOT HAVE AND DOES NOT INTEND TO HAVE EXACT HEAD COUNT OF TOTAL POPULATION OF SAHARA. PART OF PROBLEM IS CHASING DOWN NOMADS AND IN COUNTING CHILDREN AND OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS OF SAHARANS BY USE OF ARBITRARY COEFFICIENT. ACCORDING TO MFA, BEST ESTIMATE AT PRESENT OF TOTAL POPULATION IS APPROXIMATELY 70,000. THIS FIGURE IS APPROXIMATELY 10,000 MORE THAN WHAT EMBASSY HAD PREVIOUSLY ESTIMATED AS POPULATION TOTAL. MFA OFFICER SAID INCREASE STEMMED FROM TREND IN LAST SEVERAL YEARS OF SAHARAN POPULATION TO CONCENTRATE ITSELF IN TOWN WHERE THERE WOULD BE BETTER CHANCE OF OBTAINING FOOD.

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THIS TREND, OF COURSE, WAS RELATED TO THE FAMINE IN WHOLE

SAHEL AREA OF NORTH CENTRAL AFRICA.

2. ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL STATISTICS ON POPULATION BREAKDOWN
GIVEN TO THE EMBASSY BY GOS IN NOV 1967, NATIVES IN THE SAHARA
TOTALLED 33,512 PLUS 10,493 "EUROPEANS". SOME RECENT NEWS-
PAPER REPORTS BY CORRESPONDENTS WHO HAD VISITED SAHARA IN
PAST FEW MONTHS INDICATE THAT NUMBER OF EUROPEANS STILL TOTALS
AROUND 10,000.
RIVERO

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
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Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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